

**RCW 53.08.370 Telecommunications facilities—Construct, purchase, acquire, etc.—Purposes—Limitations—Eminent domain.** (1) A port district in existence on June 8, 2000, may construct, purchase, acquire, develop, finance, lease, license, handle, provide, add to, contract for, interconnect, alter, improve, repair, operate, and maintain any telecommunications facilities within or without the district's limits for the following purposes:

(a) For the district's own use;

(b) For the provision of wholesale telecommunications services within or without the district's limits; or

(c) For the provision of retail telecommunications services as authorized under this section.

(2) Except as provided in subsection (8) of this section, a port district providing wholesale or retail telecommunications services under this section shall ensure that rates, terms, and conditions for such services are not unduly or unreasonably discriminatory or preferential. Rates, terms, and conditions are discriminatory or preferential when a port district offering such rates, terms, and conditions to an entity for wholesale or retail telecommunications services does not offer substantially similar rates, terms, and conditions to all other entities seeking substantially similar services.

(3) When a port district establishes a separate utility function for the provision of wholesale or retail telecommunications services, it shall account for any and all revenues and expenditures related to its wholesale or retail telecommunications facilities and services separately from revenues and expenditures related to its internal telecommunications operations. Any revenues received from the provision of wholesale or retail telecommunications services must be dedicated to the utility function that includes the provision of wholesale or retail telecommunications services for costs incurred to build and maintain the telecommunications facilities until such time as any bonds or other financing instruments executed after June 8, 2000, and used to finance the telecommunications facilities are discharged or retired.

(4) When a port district establishes a separate utility function for the provision of wholesale or retail telecommunications services, all telecommunications services rendered by the separate function to the district for the district's internal telecommunications needs shall be charged at its true and full value. A port district may not charge its nontelecommunications operations rates that are preferential or discriminatory compared to those it charges entities purchasing wholesale or retail telecommunications services.

(5) A port district shall not exercise powers of eminent domain to acquire telecommunications facilities or contractual rights held by any other person or entity to telecommunications facilities.

(6) Except as otherwise specifically provided, a port district may exercise any of the powers granted to it under this title and other applicable laws in carrying out the powers authorized under this section. Nothing in chapter 81, Laws of 2000 limits any existing authority of a port district under this title.

(7) A port district with telecommunications facilities for use in the provision of wholesale or retail telecommunications in accordance with subsection (1) of this section may be subject to local leasehold excise taxes under RCW 82.29A.040.

(8) (a) A port district under this section may select a telecommunications company to operate all or a portion of the port district's telecommunications facilities.

(b) For the purposes of this section "telecommunications company" means any for-profit entity owned by investors that sells telecommunications services to end users.

(c) Nothing in this subsection (8) is intended to limit or otherwise restrict any other authority provided by law.

(9) A port district may provide retail telecommunications services within or without the district's limits.

(10) (a) A port district may provide retail telecommunications services to end users in unserved areas.

(b) A port district must notify and consult with the governor's statewide broadband office within 30 days of its decision to provide retail telecommunications services to unserved areas. The governor's statewide broadband office must post notices received from a port district pursuant to this subsection on its public website.

(c) Any port district that intends to provide retail telecommunications services to unserved areas must submit a telecommunications infrastructure and service plan to the governor's statewide broadband office that will be published on the office's website. Submission of plans will enable the governor's statewide broadband office: (i) To better understand infrastructure deployment; (ii) to potentially allocate funding for unserved areas; (iii) to advance the state policy objectives; (iv) to determine whether the plan aligns with state policy objectives and broadband priorities; (v) to measure progress toward serving those in unserved areas; (vi) to report on the feasibility and sustainability of the project; and (vii) to confirm that the project is within an unserved area. The telecommunications infrastructure and service plans shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

(A) Map and description of how the deployment of proposed broadband infrastructure will achieve at a minimum 100 megabits per second download speed and at a minimum 20 megabits per second upload speed and then increases to be consistent with the stated long-term state broadband speed goals for unserved areas;

(B) Project timeline prioritization of unserved areas; and

(C) Description of potential state and federal funding available to provide service to the unserved area.

(d) A port district that exercises its authority under (a) of this subsection to provide retail telecommunications services may use state funds, federal funds appropriated through the state, or federal funds dedicated for projects in unserved areas to fund projects identified in the submitted telecommunications infrastructure and service plan required in (c) of this subsection.

(e) A port district providing retail telecommunications services under this subsection must operate an open access network.

(f) Provisions in this subsection do not apply to the provision of wholesale telecommunications services authorized in this section.

(g) For the purposes of this subsection:

(i) "Open access network" means a network that, during the useful life of the infrastructure, ensures service providers may use network services and facilities at rates, terms, and conditions that are not discriminatory or preferential between providers, and employs accountable interconnection arrangements published and available publicly.

(ii) "Unserved areas" means areas of Washington in which households and businesses lack access to broadband service of speeds at a minimum of 100 megabits per second download and at a minimum 20 megabits per second upload. [2023 c 470 s 1010. Prior: 2021 c 294 s 9; 2021 c 293 s 3; 2019 c 365 s 10; 2018 c 169 s 2; 2000 c 81 s 7.]

**Explanatory statement—2023 c 470:** See note following RCW 10.99.030.

**Short title—2021 c 294:** See note following RCW 54.16.330.

**Findings—2021 c 293:** See note following RCW 54.16.330.

**Findings—2019 c 365:** See note following RCW 43.330.532.

**Findings—2000 c 81:** See note following RCW 53.08.005.